them, their rage knows no bounds. If Disraeli's royalties had been smaller, and his creditors more pressing, a Trotsky instead of Lord Beaconsfield might have resulted; if Hitler had been more successful as a water-colourist, he would have visited Nuremberg, if at all, only to erect an easel there, and with Thermos flask beside him, patiently await the sunset's glow on ancient walls. Napoleon began as a poet, and overran Europe to forget his bad verses; Count Ciano's debut was a play called *Hamlet's Happiness',* Sir John Simon made an early and fugitive appearance on the staff of the *Manchester Guardian,* and Stalin requires the Soviet Press to hail each of his speeches as an epoch-making enlargement of human understanding, a 'priceless contribution to the treasure-house of Marxist-Leninism.' Plato saw that, to secure the stability of his Republic, it was necessary to ban poetry, but neglected the more important precaution of banning from authority those who had tried without success to be poets. He should have required aspiring rulers of the Republic to prove that they had never even considered the possibility of engaging in any imaginative pursuit; scribbled verses, a water-colour sunset, any evidence of traffic with abstractions, should have quite disqualified them.

Napoleon at least gave up writing verses when he took to winning battles, and Count Ciano, when Hamlet's happiness disappointed him, threw himself into promoting his own by marrying Mussolini's daughter; but parliamentarians often try to double the role of man-of-action and man-of-letters by the simple expedient of publishing their speeches. Mr. Baldwin, with

his never-failing flair, entitled a volume of his speeches *On England,* this waste-product of his oratory competing successfully with many a laboriously prepared book. Mr. Eden and Mr. Neville Chamberlain were less successful in the same field, though neither had any difficulty in filling a sizeable volume with speeches they had made about that most saleable of all topics —peace; and M. Daladier chose the title *The Defence of France* for a collection of some of his finer oratorical efforts in the Chamber of Deputies, Corsica and elsewhere. Mr. Churchill has written as well as